

BREA NEWS

www.bnl.gov/bera/activities/brea/

Volume 11 Issue 4

November 2011

BREA Meetings

BREA meetings are held on the second Tuesday of every month (except for August), at 1 p.m. in one of the conference rooms in Bldg. 400 (except where noted).

All BREA members are invited to attend and participate.

Meeting Schedule

November 8, 2011

December 13, 2011

January 10, 2012

BREA Officers

President

Eena-Mai Franz
sroosild@aol.com

Vice President

Dave Cox
expatdave@aol.com

Treasurer

Ken Mohring
kenwadingriver@gmail.com

Secretary

Louise Hanson
hanson.louise@gmail.com

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Newsletter Editor

Mona S. Rowe
mrowe@bnl.gov



These African penguins at the Cape of Good Hope were among many fascinating sights that greeted retiree Anita Cohen traveling in South Africa last February. See story on page 3.

From the President

by Eena-Mai Franz, sroosild@aol.com

My term as BREA president is coming to an end. How fast those two years went by! Thanks to my very able and dependable co-officers Dave Cox, Ken Mohring and Louise Hanson; former presidents Arnie Peskin and Myron Strongin; our editor Mona Rowe; and numerous helpers like Joyce Tichler, Martine O'Connor, Alyce Daly and Carol Kramer. Others have come to our meetings and given us advice. And, as always, we have steady support from BERA.

We hosted a successful luncheon each year and sponsored several activities, such as tours of new facilities and a talk by Eric Forsyth. We have kept in contact with the BNL administration to answer questions that our members raise about Lab policy.

I will continue to be active in BREA because it is a fun and useful thing to do. I will also continue to be Arnie's backup on the Lab's Community Advisory Council. BREA members number over 300. I encourage more of you to become involved with the organization and help the new officers.

New Officers Nominated

It is time to elect new officers for the January 2012-December 2014 term. I appointed a nominating committee consisting of Myron Strongin, Joyce Tichler and myself to provide a list of candidates for the various positions. The candidates are listed below, along with a short biography of each individual. I thank the committee members for their excellent work.

While the nominating committee has offered only a single candidate for each position, write-in candidates are accepted, in accordance with BREA's bylaws. If a candidate receives a positive vote on a majority of the ballots returned, that candidate wins the office. Note that returning a ballot but not voting for a candidate is the equivalent of a "NO" vote. If any candidate does not get a majority vote, the office will be left vacant until another election.

The ballot includes the candidates nominated by the committee and space for write-in candidates. **Please mail your ballots to BREA by December 12, 2011.**

Dave Cox for President

Dave Cox was a senior scientist in the Physics Department prior to his retirement at the end of 1999, after 36 years of service at the laboratory. His research work was carried out mostly at the HFBR and NSLS, where he participated in numerous collaborative studies with research groups from around the world. He resides in the village of Bellport with his wife, Martine O'Connor, who worked in the Medical Department for many years until her departure in 1989. During the past eight years, he has served BREA as Membership Chairman, Secretary and Vice President.

Ken Mohring for Vice President

Ken Mohring worked at BNL for 34 years. His final position was as the Division Administrative Manager in the Staff Services Division. He was responsible for budgets, coordination of the environmental and safety program, and administration of the food service program. Prior to that, he spent 15 years in the Medical Department, where he was responsible for budget and administrative activities, and for six years was an auditor for Associated Universities, Inc. Before coming to BNL, he worked for a public accounting firm in New York City. He has a master's degree and is a Certified Public Accountant. Since retirement, he has become a Master Gardener and volunteers at the LI Horticultural Research & Extension farm and his local church. Ken lives in Wading River. Ken has served as BREA's Treasurer since 2006.

Louise Hanson for Secretary

Louise Hanson has been serving as BREA Secretary since April 2010, when she was appointed by the BREA Board to fill an unexpected vacancy. Before she retired, Louise was first a chemist in the Department of Applied Science and later an Education Program Manager in the Office of Educational Programs.

Steve Shapiro for Treasurer

Steve Shapiro worked at BNL for 37 years before retiring in 2008. A condensed-matter physicist studying phase transformations, he did most of his research at the High Flux Beam Reactor. During his career at BNL, he served as Associate Chair of the Physics Department, supervising the solid state program; Chair of the Brookhaven Council; and member of the Diversity Advisory Committee and several incident-investigation committees. He currently has a guest appointment and is a frequent visitor to the Laboratory. He resides in Wading River.

- Eena-Mai Franz, sroosild@aol.com



Ballot for BREA Officers

President

☐ Dave Cox

☐ _____

Vice President

☐ Ken Mohring

☐ _____

Secretary

☐ Louise Hanson

☐ _____

Treasurer

☐ Steve Shapiro

☐ _____

Please vote and mail your ballot to:

BREA
Brookhaven National Laboratory
Bldg. 421
Upton, NY 11973

Trekking Through South Africa

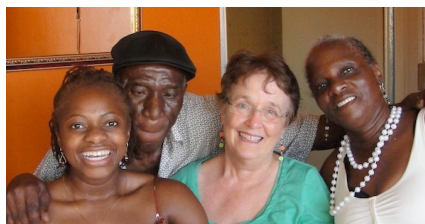
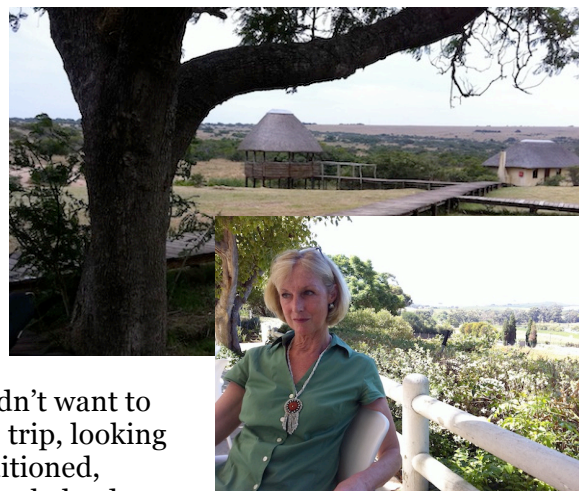
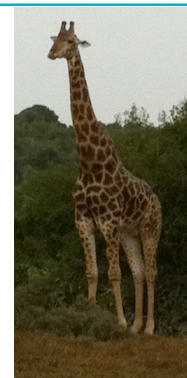
by Anita Cohen, afcohen@optonline.net



In 1987, my husband (and fellow retiree) Marty Van Lith and I welcomed two young sisters from South Africa into our family. Ever since, I have wanted to visit their native land, including Alexander, the black township in Johannesburg where they lived until they joined us at ages 11 and 14. In February, I finally fulfilled that dream. While Marty volunteered to stay home to keep tabs on the dreadful winter, I traveled with Kathleen Tuohy (Physics Department) to enjoy summer in the southernmost part of Africa. We spent the first half of our trip in Cape Town where our older daughter, Linah, had traveled earlier

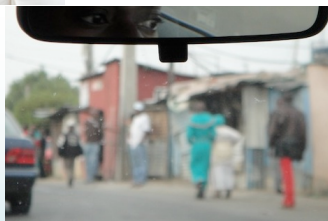
to “work the harvest” at the Meerlust winery and vineyards. Then we flew to Johannesburg to spend the second half with Diana, our younger daughter, who was visiting her childhood home with her husband Corey and daughters Isis and Aiyanna. Neither Linah nor Diana had been back since 1995.

Some of you know that I have multiple sclerosis and use a cane, though I mostly rely these days on the rolling walker I brought along. Kathy and I had traveled together before so I knew I could count on her to realize when I might need assistance or be too tired to continue, and Linah and Diana are wonderfully sensitive about my disability. But I didn’t want to leave anything to chance, so I did a lot of research before the trip, looking for lodging that was both completely accessible and air-conditioned, important considerations with MS. Eliminating the unknowns helped avoid a lot of stress and problems, and, as these photos show, left me free to enjoy every place we went. Photos below were taken by Kathy, above left by Linah, and the rest by me.



Photos, clockwise from upper right:

- The day after we arrived in SA, we flew to the Eastern Cape to spend two days at Hlosi Game Lodge in the Amakhala Game Reserve. We saw many exotic species, but the giraffes were majestic.



- Then we spent three days at the Devon Valley Hotel overlooking the wine-growing area of Cape Town.

- Our drive around Table Rock National Park took us to Boulders Beach (top left, with Kathy) and Cape Point (with Linah).



Clockwise from upper left:

- Diana and I at her niece’s house in Alexander with her uncle Pete and birth mom Magdalene, not far from the Alex street scene shown.
- Our last stop was Misty Hills Country Hotel in Muldersdrift, near the “Cradle of Civilization,” where Kathy snapped this photo as I relaxed in the pool with Aiyanna, Diana, Corey and Isis.

Changes to Medical Plan for 2012

On October 18, BREA President Eena-Mai Franz, Vice President Dave Cox and Treasurer Ken Mohring met with Bob Lincoln, the Lab's Chief Human Resources Officer, who notified them about a significant change in retiree benefits, starting in January 2012. According to Lincoln, the roughly 1,600 Medicare-eligible retirees who retired before January 2002 will have to pay 10 percent of their medical premiums, which is about \$43 per month per person for the CIGNA Open Access Plus plan. Those who retired in 2002 and after will pay 20 percent of the premium, which is about what most of the retirees in this group pay now.

Lincoln said that the Lab is no longer able to fully absorb the ever-increasing costs of providing retiree medical coverage. Starting January 1, 2012, all participants will share in the cost of medical benefits. While some retirees already share the benefits premium cost, this will be a new cost for many others.

Lab Director Sam Aronson sent a letter to retirees, participants on long-term disability, and eligible family members to explain the changes in benefits. His letter is posted on the BREA website:

www.bnl.gov/bera/activities/brea/

Listed below are opportunities to learn more about the changes:

- 2012 Retiree Open Enrollment Booklet – mailed to you by the end of October
- Retiree open enrollment meetings – 9 to 10 a.m., Thursday, November 3 and Thursday, November 10, in Berkner Hall Auditorium
- Benefits Fair – 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Thursday, November 3 and Thursday November 10, in Bldg. 400
- Further details – a letter, mailed in December, will explain how to make monthly premium payments and tell you when to expect your identification cards

At the November 3 and 10 meetings, the Lab will explain an HMO option for Medicare-eligible residents of Nassau and Suffolk counties on Long Island. Retirees under the age of 65 have a different HMO option. Both options may reduce costs. BREA officers are urging retirees to attend one of the meetings, where they will be able to ask questions and voice their opinions about the upcoming changes.

This year's open enrollment period is November 1-18, 2011. If you have questions, contact the Benefits Office at (631) 344-2877, (631) 344-5126, (631) 344-2881, or 1-800-353-5321.

- Mona S. Rowe, mrowe@bnl.gov

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